

BRIAN HOOVER



2008 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

During September 5th - November 4th, 2008, I had an exhibition of my paintings at the Robert and Peggy Sears Art Gallery, on the campus of Dixie State College in St. George, Utah. The Sears Art Gallery is housed in the new Eccles Fine Art Center and the exhibition attracted not only gallery goers, but all those who attended the musical and theatrical productions in the center as well. This was a two-person exhibition. Susan Harris, a friend, colleague and ceramicist also exhibited with me.

The exhibition space is one of the largest I have shown my work in and required 33 paintings to adequately fill the room. The painting sizes ranged approximately from 20"x30" - 36"x72". I framed my paintings in modestly priced standard black frames. These frames were relatively inexpensive, but still ranged from \$120-\$300 each.

The funds I received from my grant went to painting supplies, framing and transportation of the work to and from the gallery.

ARTIST STATEMENT

The imagery in my work revolves around dreams, myth and spirituality.

For several years now, I've been very regimental about keeping a dream diary by my bed. Just scribbling a few notes when you wake in the night is crucial for remembering a dream the following morning. Dreams are important to me because they stand as a reminder that all is not orderly in the universe. Life is an enigma. Life is surprising. The unknown and the unknowable and our relative smallness in the universe are very important in maintaining my own spiritual ideology.

Apart from the inspiration I derive from a powerful dream, these night diaries also represent veiled insights into my own psyche. Houses, both strange and familiar, are reoccurring themes in my dreams, as well as elemental things such as wind, water and fire. I am aware of the Jungian impulse to interpret these things outright, but I am equally satisfied to be awed by the seemingly infinite and unknowable well that they originate from.

Combining dream imagery, I appropriate iconography from the ancient past to popular culture. I then endeavor to create a sense of powerful myth and magic in the hope that I may create my own objects of reverence.

SUSAN HARRIS



2008 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Funds awarded through the Utah Arts Council's individual Artist Grant program were spent to produce my contribution to the two-person exhibition "Mythical Objects: Detached Realities" (with painter Brian Hoover). It was hosted by Dixie State University's Robert and Peggy Sears Art Gallery, and ran from September 5th through November 4th, 2008.

One of the largest exhibition spaces in which I have shown in recent years, my work for the show comprised a record 55 pieces, more than half produced this year. Funds were spent for materials, including precious metal lusters for some works, and for the commissioning of six wall-mounted shelving units ranging in size from eight feet to 36 inches, used to display works in series. Remaining funds were used for packing materials (bubble wrap) and van rental to transport work to and from the show. I also documented my work, both in slides and digital images for future professional use.

ARTIST STATEMENT

My ceramic work evolves from my long-held fascination with artifacts from the past, most notably ancient oriental and Etruscan bronze ritual vessels. I am preoccupied with the mysterious purposes, intricate surface details and mythological symbols, which characterize these objects. Using clay instead of metal, not to mention a contemporary rather than ancient temperament, I challenge myself to re-interpret their forms and meanings. The “Six Legged Ding with Bufonidae” is a current expression of a form I have explored for more than a decade.

Recent works continue to reference techniques and forms I have explored for the past several years. They are fired in a variety of processes, especially reduction cooling, where no glaze is applied to the external surface of the works in order to retain crisp and intricate textural details. The appearance is reminiscent of wrought iron and other ancient metals. More recently, I have investigated similar forms with greater functional intent, such as the “Heaven III” tea set. Often I finish them with the addition of color and pattern resulting from atmospheric firings in salt and wood.

I enjoy the fact that my pieces do not speak of this time and place in history, but could exist at any moment in the past or future as well.

ERIN ROMERO



2008 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Funding from the Utah Arts Council will be used to support the creation of a new work by Erin Kaser Romero, “Damage Control.” The piece is a film that will utilize the visual appeal and a variety of locations in Salt Lake City. Erin Kaser Romero has a background in dance, video, and choreography. She will be combining these areas of interest to create imagery that is immediately captivating, thought-provoking, complex, and beautiful.

Structures in the city that are thought of for their every day purpose, rather than their unique architectural features will be the primary focus. Places such as parking garages, bridges, stairways, windows, alleyways, and rooftops have their own appeal as visually stimulating locations. “Damage Control” will capture the structures in the surrounding environment of Salt Lake City including mountains, streets, and parks.

Rather than telling a story through performance, this piece will utilize images to elicit an emotional response. Parts of a story may be revealed, but it is up to the viewer to connect the visual cues that are both displayed in both abstract and tangible manners. The human form may not ever be recognizable at the completion of this film; rather, movement will be overlaid within locations, giving them ghostly qualities that represent memories or emotions that could have existed within or around the structures themselves.

ARTIST STATEMENT

As a choreographer, I have been interested in combining filming media with my work since having the opportunity to experiment with it as an undergraduate at the University of Utah. In my professional career, I have continued to work with film as a way to work in both two and three dimensions.

I am integrating the concept of incorporating still images with moving bodies, and layering backgrounds of events. This still gives me the ability to play with time, but also allows the viewer to experience all the details of a caught moment, slowing time to infinity. I challenge myself to catch an emotion, event, or personality through isolated moments in specific locations.

It is growing more and more common to view our world in a two dimensional manner on TV, computer screens, hand-held video games, digital photography, and in movie theaters. It is a current interest of mine to find depth and dimension in a visual image that has been brought to a flat screen.

ROLAND THOMPSON



2008 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The IAS grant made it possible to obtain the supplies needed to produce a new body of work for exhibition. The series will be exhibited at Sego Art Center, Provo, Utah in February of 2009. Afterward, I hope the work will be useful in finding gallery representation locally and in Santa Fe, New Mexico.

The work is a series of large drawings and paintings based on small gestural drawings that records the body in motion. In this case, my arm performs a predetermined sequence of movements to produce a circuitous continued line. The speed of the line is rapid as it races toward and around invisible focal points. The drawing is completed when the marking is rich and full—or when intuition screams, “Stop!”

ARTIST STATEMENT

My work is a search for enrichment through experience of the unexpected; and in greater scope, is a dialog with the elusive concept of beauty.

Each painting begins with a production plan. It's a practical measure to get the work going and promote balance, clarity, and moderation. As a work progresses, the image warps to accommodate errors and other anomalies. It becomes a unique interpretation of an ideal.

Self-expression in the artwork takes place through color usage and the assignment of titles. I'm more playful in this area to complement the strict nature of the marks.

STACY A. PHILLIPS



2008 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

My pursuit to obtain a position for a three month residency in art making is based on my desire for time, development and community.

I want to indulge in the time given and allow myself to finish thoughts, solve problems, and self edit within my work both conceptually and technically. I have had the privilege of participating in many workshops in the past ten years with various teachers and other artists. I intend to explore and develop a technical dialog within a new body of work based on a marriage of these ceramic techniques I have learned, along with creating a more intimate dialog with the conceptual idea I am interested in and want to pursue. This pursuit will entail the merging of both two or three dimensional work in ceramics.

ARTIST STATEMENT

One's personal relationship to the human body, be it our own or another's, is central to the place my work stems from -- our place in the world versus the space that we occupy. I am interested in how we indentify this space.

The need and desire to adorn our bodies has been consistent throughout history. How and why we adorn the human figure is curious to me; what we need or want to communicate to ourselves and others.

Cross-cultural similarities exist in how we go about adorning our bodies. The parallel between the history of adornment and today's culture, the ritual of fashion in all tribes, and the choices of materials and applications, continuously feed my desire to make art.

SANDY BRUNVAND



2008 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Land & Water, Lines & Shapes

With this grant I continued to explore multi-layered multi-media works that involve printmaking, drawing, and layering of fiber papers with beeswax and additional constructed line elements. This grant facilitated the creation of these types of images on a much larger scale, both as larger individual works and as large installation pieces.

At the moment I am limited to fairly small pieces of paper that I dip into the beeswax using an electric cooking pan to create the translucency that I desire. My proposed budget included the construction of a larger wax application system of my own design, (which will be constructed in the near future) and a variety of Japanese fiber papers to be used in these works.

ARTIST STATEMENT

My work is of this place in which I dwell. My daily excursions into the hills are a key factor in everything I create. My connection with this place, with these surroundings, and the observations from these treks, become the foundation of my work. My observations of natural forms on the trails become an abstracted image. Plants and vistas play a large role in these pieces. The tangle of scrub oak branches becomes reminiscent of human forms, and the small plant forms, so fragile and yet so foundational for all the life in the hills, become abstract shapes that underpin my images. These icons of the trail represent, to me, the wholeness of our existence and the nature of our journey through this life.

I am very interested in the texture and translucency of paper, especially thin handmade paper from Japan, Bhutan and India. When coated with beeswax they take on additional qualities of texture, heft, color, and light. I am especially drawn to how these papers take on a new translucent life when dipped into wax and how they combine with each other when layered.

Occasionally, I use the mark of staples to add a functional as well as a formal one in these pieces. I am interested in how stapling adds a dimension of texture and line (reminiscent of the process marks in woodcut prints). The delicate lines created by traditional printmaking techniques and by drawing juxtaposed with the harsh, yet beautiful, line created by a stapler, make an unusual field of textures. The mark of the staple adds a functional element as well as a formal one in these pieces.



Land and Water. Colored pencil and beeswax on paper.

SYLVIA RAMACHANDRAN



2008 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

I am researching ceramic surfaces and mixed media elements that will expand the range of color and texture in my work. For the last four years, I have been working mainly in porcelain, with limited color. However, I recently set up a new studio space that contains an electric kiln not suited for porcelain firings.

I am using this opportunity to develop low-temperature surfaces such as terra sigillata (a refined, burnished clay surface), to test more colorful glazes, and to begin incorporating metal elements into my pieces. The grant funds are helping me to purchase materials and equipment for this transition.

ARTIST STATEMENT

The objects we make, use, and collect often reveal insights about human nature. I'm interested in forms that blur the boundaries between the utilitarian and the poetic, the inanimate and the animate, the tangible and the spiritual.

The pieces in the series displayed here are fantasies on the spoon form. They explore themes of growth, outreach, nurturing, compulsiveness, and playfulness. Hand-built of porcelain, they are the survivors of an intensive series of firings designed to build up layers of subtle color and luster. Risk and transformation are central to my technical process and to the work's meaning.



Mindful of Sparrows 2, porcelain.

NAMON BILLS



2008 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The State Street Project presented a portrait of the state of Utah at the intersection of historical documentation and personal self-expression. Selecting US Highway 89 as a representative cross section of the state, a group of eight artists traveled the length of the road from the Idaho border to the Arizona border. This experience formed the basis for the show. Each artist's work was based on individual experience and interpretation. Together, the pieces formed a collective portrait of our experience. Participating artists include Namon Bills, Steven Stradley, Justin Wheatley, Sarah Bigelow, Shawn Stradley, Steph Johnsen, Elisabeth Wilson, and Steve Hardman.

Various venues throughout the state have shown the State Street Project during 2008, beginning in Salt Lake City and traveling as far south as Kanab and as far north as Logan. The Utah Arts Council grant helped with expenses in transporting the show from venue to venue around the state.

ARTIST STATEMENT

My work as part of the State Street Project stems from an inborn interest in collage and collage imagery. The painted images, as well as the collage material in this mixed media work, are all from Highway 89 in Utah. My goal with this project was to synthesize my State Street experience into a unified whole, combining various visual elements from throughout the state in each piece.

In “Bird” the primary image is a vulture from Peery’s Egyptian Theatre in Ogden. Viewers may also recognize the sign from The Bluebird Restaurant in Logan, along with other signage from the Salt Lake Valley.

DAY CHRISTENSEN



2008 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

In 1992, I obtained a large Washington Handpress that had been used in the Journalism Department at the University of Utah. The press was disassembled, some pieces were missing, and over the years the cast iron press had become worn. I now have it assembled and in a work space that can accommodate this large a press. The grant has made it possible for me to fabricate the missing pieces, refurbish the press, and get it in working order.

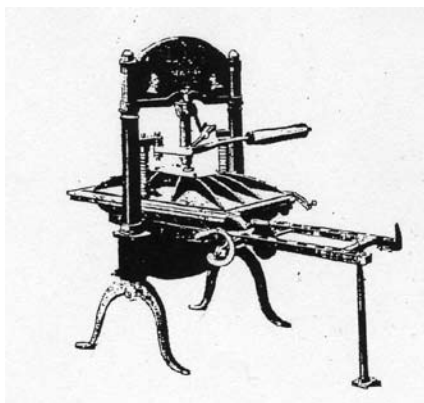
The Washington Handpress will provide the opportunity to produce larger format projects, using a variety of printing techniques.

ARTIST STATEMENT

In 1976, while at graduate school in Cambridge, Massachusetts, I came across a display of livre d'artiste in the Widener Library. A variety of European artists were represented and I was intrigued with the idea of working with original artwork in a book format.

After moving to Utah in 1980, I found a small Chandler & Price Press, obtained foundry type from England, and established Wormwood Press. In addition to printing artist book projects under this imprint, in 1987 Red Butte Press at the University of Utah asked me to design, handset and print several book projects on their 1846 Columbian Handpress.

My interest continues to focus on creating books that combine original art, with hand-made papers, handset type, hand printing, and binding. I enjoy the collaboration with other artists, the sound of the metal type, the feel of the paper and the smell of the ink. It is still a wonder when the impression is pulled and the sheet is lifted from the press bed.



LAURIE LISONBEE



2008 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This grant supports the creation of paintings for a one-person exhibition at A Gallery in Salt Lake City, to be held in October 2009. The show will consist of oil paintings of the human figure, posed in yoga postures and gestures. The grant money is going toward costs of paint supplies, supports, frames, models and other expenses. The bulk of the funds are for frames created by A Gallery as well as for the arched frames that I buy from antique and thrift stores.

More of my paintings can currently be seen at A Gallery in Salt Lake City, with the larger body of work to be exhibited there next fall. My heart-felt appreciation goes to the Utah Arts Council and its staff for their generous support.

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ARTIST STATEMENT

Yoga comprises a whispery, gestural language, the means of expression for my figurative paintings. It creates a mind space where the psycho-spiritual finds perfect expression in the physical. Yoga postures convey worlds of meaning; human-pretzel poses and seemingly impossible balancing acts are metaphors for the treacherous predicaments of life. Little things I can hold in my hand land right in my painting - stones, shells, bones, and other objects of domestic ritual. Juxtaposed with the figure, they become very nearly objects of meditation themselves. Hand gestures hint of vows, rituals, meditations, of personal losses and yearnings.

While yoga is a pop culture phenomenon of our time, this practice is 3,000 years old, and is poised at an interesting cross-section of past/present, east/west, ancient/contemporary. Yoga's contortions paradoxically stretch the body into a stillness, a personal space where, for me, millennia of eastern and western traditions merge. I think of my paintings as "Romanesque arch meets eastern meditation practice" with sensations of wholeness that are both primal and universal. East, west - and everywhere else - are all found at the quiet center.

MAUREEN O'HARA URE



2008 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

My proposal described plans to experiment with ways to initiate a new body of work. Usually, I move quickly from some rough sketchbook ideas right to paint on panel. In this project, however, I started off by constructing small platforms on which I composed 3d scenes, mostly flora and fauna, made up of simple paper cutouts positioned with tape, string, staples and wire—whatever nonprecious materials I had at hand. I played with different ways to light these scenes. Shooting the most promising of these, I proceeded to use the photos to lay out the first few paintings on panel.

Still in the early-to-middle stages of this work, very impatient with how long it is taking me to move on to paint, I would say that such an indirect approach to image-making feels too awkward, more frustrating than rewarding. While I cannot yet tell whether all this will lead to stronger imagery, just having messed with my routine should lead to some new discoveries in the studio.

ARTIST STATEMENT

For the past several years, my work has featured animals and imaginary landscapes. Most of these painted creatures have been adapted from forms I first encountered in my travels, in medieval stonework, manuscripts, and other museum artifacts. Populating my paintings with assorted beasts has opened up rich possibilities for narrative and for metaphor, as in two recent solo exhibitions which explored themes of war and peace, Paradise and the Fall.

The Utah Arts Council-supported experiment is the bridge linking my past and future large-scale projects. Long-term plans (going into late 2010) involve my collaborator of two decades, poet Katharine Coles. We hope to interest a publisher in our ideas to develop a bestiary in response to the imagery in Byzantine mosaics of Venice, Ravenna and Istanbul. This book would merge my new experiments in paint (begun here) with her text.

More examples of work, the paintings on panels (and 2 limited-edition books developed from my travel sketchbooks) can be seen locally at Phillips Gallery, as well as on my site:

www.maureenoharaure.com



What Rough Beasts, mixed media on panel.

JEN HARMON ALLEN



2008 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Grant money awarded to me will help me create a new body of work in bronze.

While these pieces have not been completed yet, my current pieces reflect experimentation within traditional materials that I hope will lead into the work proposed for this grant.

I am inspired by two groupings of work for this project: “Miel” is an abstract bronze figure that I have started to engrave with swirling patterns on the surface. Each casting is unique and vibrant.

The other is my current ceramic and steel clothing, the imagery of which I would like to incorporate in the project.

I aim to reach for richer text and texture in my pieces, and these are possible ways in which I can see my work becoming more contemporary and unique.

ARTIST STATEMENT

My work is an effort to reference the female figure while leaving room for symbolism. In the context of this show's pieces, I use clay and steel to make clothing.

While we normally wouldn't wear a dress made of these materials, we can't help but relate bodily to it. Would this fit? How would it feel?

These pieces are about the relation between our bodies and our sense of self. In my work, clothing is a charged metaphor for empowerment. How many battles do our clothes fight for us on a daily basis? The form of my sculptures may be curvy and feminine like a dress, but they are rigid and assertive.

I also see a bit of absurdity in these works by exposing fashionable form for what it is—steel and clay, but permeable and eroded: here today, gone tomorrow.

While I start with a traditional reference to the figure, my use of the materials isn't all that typical. These pieces are made with fencing wire cut and assembled almost like a normal garment, then covered in clay and glazes. I fire them in my kiln taking care not to surpass the melting temperature of steel.



Miel.

ANNA CAMPBELL BLISS



2008 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Explorations

Recently I have been reviewing ideas that have been part of my visual vocabulary. From mathematics and science, art history, poetry and human experience the direction has been the connectedness of ideas. I have also been working at a larger architectural scale for an exhibition at the Finch Lane Gallery scheduled for 2009. The UAC grant provided the impetus for further explorations.

The large scale work TSUNAMI demands more time and I am unable to exhibit it for this occasion. This current work was inspired by numerous accounts of floods and other disasters and explores the power of water.

ARTIST STATEMENT

I am showing three works that represent departures and beginnings in my work.

“Man” was developed for the mural, “The Discoverers” 1996 in the Salt Lake City International terminal. Realistic figures were unacceptable but references to computer technology were admissible.

“Going My Way” 2007 is a computer based screenprint on aluminum. Man and woman in fractal forest.

“Jumping Koi at Lake Truchet” 1993 is a computer based screenprint, airbrush and hand painting.

The program based on Truchet’s algorithm, when developed with a random number generator, reminded me of the patterns formed on the ocean surface while fishing at Puget Sound. Water studies have entered my work in various ways. Here I combined other mediums for a more tactile quality.

KELLY PUGH



2008 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

My grant objective was to prepare for and submit professional quality Public Art Commission applications. As a result, I submitted to Southern Utah University and was able to present my ideas for the project on a larger scale. Because I was better prepared I was offered the job.

Because the preparation, travel and presentations take money to even apply, the grant money was a very appreciated gift because it enabled me to pursue my career in an area I had little experience in, but found that it was an area I very much enjoyed.

ARTIST STATEMENT

Because Pugh's grant objective was to prepare for and submit professional quality public art commission applications, two samples of a completed public art commission project are shown here. These are hanging in Southern Utah University's Old Main Building. They are entitled Old Main and Old Main in the Beginning. The first depicts three windows giving the viewer insights into the three levels of Old Main and the activities that were typically performed there. The second sample depicts the building as it was in its beginning with many of its founders shown in the front.

Pugh has also included current work that will be used to apply for and prepare for murals to be hung in the San Juan County hospital located in Blanding, Utah. These are samples of the work that will be hung in a much larger format on two walls inside the building. The first mural depicts the history of San Juan County starting with its first settlers and following history through today and onward with hope for the future. Pugh has several more painting samples depicting more time periods but only four are shown here.

JENNIFER SUFLITA



2008 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Working both as a painter and printmaker, I have been making figurative artwork that explores the dynamics of human interaction. Over the last few years, my work has shifted from focusing mainly on the individual to the emotional experience with relationships. I have decided that the direction I would like to take with this idea now is to create a series of paintings that investigate the influence of group dynamics, moving away from the line quality of printmaking to using color in order to evoke a more subtle and powerful emotional experience. I have chosen to assemble twelve large paintings into a massive, interchangeable mural.

This grant will enable me to purchase the raw materials as well as the money to develop photos to use as I work. Pursuing my ideas into a physical creation requires many physical resources and a great amount of time.

ARTIST STATEMENT

"We do not see things as they are, but as we are." -- Anais Nin

My approach to art, like my life, is spontaneous and chaotic more than it is systematic. Individuals and their relationships intrigue me. While I can think things through intellectually, I tend to act on the emotionally satisfying decisions. Not only does this happen in my interactions with people, this theme also surfaces in the way I create art. For me, the process of making art is where decision-making and intuition, turmoil and harmony, action and contemplation, all come together.

By experimenting with size, from small and intimate to huge and imposing, I explore the interaction among subjects, for which I have an incessant curiosity. I have also come to understand what a powerful effect that color, mark-making, or composition can play in the overall influence of a piece. I am interested in the expression of the figure, but also the meaning expressed by a beautiful line or brush mark.

STEVEN STRADLEY



2008 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

My project is based on experimental mark making in the medium of oil paint. I intend to explore mixing different mediums for oil painting, use alternative mark making tools, and explore the painting ground/support as an opportunity to make marks.

I have already explored wax, galkyd, varnish, mineral spirits and various mixtures of said mediums. I have also been exploring a variety of methods to apply the paint and alter the way it reacts to the surface. Differing viscosities is of particular interest to me. In allowing paint in different viscous mediums to combine or repel, various visual textures and mark making are allowed to occur. The wax medium may be altered in many ways as well. It can be melted, applied directly, or a combination of both, which yields significantly more interesting results.

My method has also changed within the context of my project. I have explored other tools and methods to get paint onto the surface. I have not yet experimented with other grounds and gesso techniques to allow for experimental mark making. This is something that I now have material for and will be exploring in the near future.

ARTIST STATEMENT

Social Accumulation

Networks form our created civilization. Business, gang activity, traffic, homelessness, communication, internet, etc. are examples of individual networks.

When you focus on the individuals' interaction within these networks, layers of activity remain as testimony to the activity. Urban marks, such as graffiti, are added to civilization. Structures begin to age and deteriorate, revealing layers within the structure, sometimes revealing the infrastructure itself. The accumulation or deterioration of substance from human activity becomes a record of our existence and interaction in the urban landscape. This record is a scar in our environment. These markings occur spontaneously, independent of other surrounding marks. However, as the density of marks increases, they develop into layers that unify each other until they appear intentionally linked together.

My work follows this pattern of creation. Spontaneous marks are placed down suggesting these urban marks or the infrastructure. The work develops as layers are built upon each other, gradually becoming more deliberate until the work finally results in a link between the spontaneous and the intentional. These marks may communicate a sense of subsystems within the network. Recognizing that we are part of interconnecting systems, even those within our own bodies, is an important aspect of understanding my role in life.

STEVEN LARSON



2008 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Submitted herein are large and small-scale drawings created with graphite and watercolor. My recent work explores the tension between subtle and abrasive marks. The work addresses issues of war, weather-related destruction, class and social ideologies, and inner-city gentrification. I am fascinated with the documentation of humanity through architectural development and change. This next movement that I have begun represents my experience as a community member and what I see occurring in our societal landscape. These drawings are mostly imaginative and are developed intuitively. Therefore a specific message is not evident. Depictions of commotion mirror some of my own life experiences.

My objective is to create work free from the expectations of clients and galleries. The galleries I work with are not interested in carrying my new paintings or drawings, as it doesn't fit with their standards. In order for my work to continue moving in this new direction I must abandon my previous subject matter. Funds from the Individual Artist Grant will help assure that I can focus entirely on this new direction, reinventing myself as an artist.

ARTIST STATEMENT

From the pear to the peach
the figuring out of speech
from lung to the tongue
un-erased trace of layers
to steep to reach
same song sung
by many among
us we all do stand
grab on because you can
to the extension of dreams
inner-conscious scenes
to weave around the in
between's of episodes exploding
ghostly tales too tall to tell but don't ignore
its something to live during the snore

flowing and going ore boat rowing
lines of linear measures of exploring
forms of ectoplasmic upheaval
explosive times fire against fabricated walkways of
suburban streets that guide the feats
winding they hide piled high
unaware of structures that were always
their system's overloaded and
concrete coated on top of Old Smokey
too thick to spot horizons compiled of
social class acts like it has a recess bell reminding to return
back to domestic battles based on the sensation
of gentrified clay elation and window-scaped nation
moving in what may be a direction
or is it just a ramification randomized
algorithms contradiction of formlessness still
reverberating nerves of with or without words
cant bail me out.



DOMINIC RAIMONDO & THE SUDANESE COMMUNITY



Siro XXXX, Alex Kongo and Dominic Raimondo

2008 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

2008 FOLK ARTS MASTER CLASS/WORKSHOP GRANT

This grant supports a series of workshops at which members of Salt Lake's Sudanese community get together to remember, and learn from each other, how to hand sculpt the clay toys they made as children. Led by Dominic Raimondo, the group sculpts mostly the cows and bulls they played with while learning how to be good herdsman.

Bulls play a large role in Sudanese culture and economy and this project includes the relearning of the traditional bull songs herders sing. Their goal is to maintain these beautiful traditions here in Utah, to bring the refugee community together and help strengthen their identity in their new Utah home.

LOST BOYS OF SUDAN COW PROJECT

This project was started to tell of the plight of the tribes of southern Sudan and the story of the Lost Boys of Sudan, to help the Boys remember their culture, and to raise money for the education of those who have come to America and those who are still in Africa.

The story of the Diaspora of the Southern Sudanese tribes is a compelling one. Many Lost Boys survived the attacks on their villages because they were away herding their families' cows at the time of the attacks. They have been displaced for many years and miles. Many died from hunger, thirst, wild animals and being hunted by their fellow country men. Those who have survived and come to the United States are now young men.



The making of clay bulls and cows is a tradition of the tribes of Equatorial (southern) Sudan, taught to boys by their fathers when they were young and still living in their villages. Clay for the cows was dug from river banks or taken from ant hills in the morning when it was still damp. The cows were then sun dried. The boys played with the clay bulls and cows to learn the basics of how to care for them before they began herding the animals themselves. Cows are an important part of tribal life and currency. Having a good herd is central to finding a good wife.

The bulls made by Salt Lake's Lost Boys are made from purchased clay that is glazed and fired in an electric kiln. They are experimenting with pit firing techniques which are closer to their tradition. They have been assisted in their efforts by Clay Arts, an organization of local clay artists. Several groups of Lost Boys in cities around the country are making the clay toys of their childhood to reinforce their heritage while helping support their transition to America as well as their countrymen back home.

For more information about where to find clay cows and bulls or inquiries about the project:

Dominic Raimondo
(801) 688-0908
raimondodominic@yahoo.com

Margo Bryan-Petersen of Clay Arts
(801) 274-7874

MARGARET WILLIS



2008 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

As a prolific painter, I am constantly drawing on new experiences and visual data to create work. Travel has become an avenue of inspiration for my work as I explore and understand myself and others in the context of each place. It is necessary to understand the culture and environment in which a person lives to understand and really capture their essence. In my treks across the globe, whether visiting old friends or making new ones, I have developed relationships with diverse and interesting characters who embody their unique habitats. This continuous body of work serves as a record of each subject within their present and individual surroundings, their culture, home, and place in time.

Grant money was used to travel across the country, spanning locations from Alaska to New York, and also for supplies to create this body of work.

ARTIST STATEMENT

Being present in the intimate moments I capture is essential to my process. I work as an active observer, recording the ambiance of a place through my visual and emotional interaction with each element. I quickly form an intimate relationship with my subjects that allows me to form a close and romantic mood in my pieces. The viewer is transported to a private moment in time—a moment in between moments—that exists in everyday life.

Creating paintings from photographs I take while I'm interacting with an environment makes it possible to capture more spontaneous and movement-filled moments in shifting surroundings and enables me to rapidly explore an area. Motivated by an increasing interest in painting seedy bars and coffee shops, I set out with my camera for the sole purpose of recreating these scenes in paint. My paintings become records of my own existence: the time I live in, the people I've known, and places I've explored.

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STEPHEN WILLIAMS



2008 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

With the script completed, my next task is to get the funds to produce my film, “A Double-Minded Man” (the fund-raising phase being, generally, the most difficult part in the film-making process). I would use the funds to cover travel expenses incurred as I pitch the film to potential investors.

I have leads in New York City and Los Angeles, contacts I made at the Sundance Producer’s Conference. I would set up meetings in both cities, pitching to as many qualified investors as possible.

ARTIST STATEMENT

Seven years ago I attended the funeral of a close friend who had died suddenly of a heart attack. The Mormon chapel was packed; the speeches and eulogies praised my friend for his loving heart, his unshakeable faith and upright character. As I listened, my own grief was complicated by a sense of surrealism, irony. I had known him as man with a secret, a man who had lived part of his life in shadow for nearly forty years, who had sought furtive, compulsive sex with other men in public bathrooms. The man I knew was often deeply depressed, occasionally suicidal.

The funeral haunted me for months.

Two years ago, I decided to write a screenplay about the plight of devoutly religious men who are also gay or bi-sexual. I finished the feature script this past summer.

My plan is to first shoot a short version of the script (15 minutes in length), then use the short film to raise money to produce the full-length feature. The tone I intend for the film is intimate realism, with a just touch of satire.

In the wake of the enormous acrimony over the passage of Proposition 8, I hope that the film will serve as a bridge to help heal bitter division. I would also like to raise awareness about those who find themselves stuck in an impossible dichotomy between religious beliefs and sexual orientation. And, finally, I hope the film will remind viewers (on both sides) that sexuality is still largely a mystery, that compassion and open-mindedness are essential to navigate these ambiguous waters.